

Claims

[c1] A method for facilitating selection of a product for an electrical distribution and control system using a network-based system including a server and at least one device connected to the server via a network, said method comprising the steps of:
receiving product specification information from a user via the device;
comparing the received product specification information with pre-stored product information;
selecting at least one product which matches the received product specification information; and
downloading information related to the selected product.

[c2] A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein the product is a transformer.

[c3] A method in accordance with Claim 2 wherein the transformer is a core and coil transformer.

[c4] A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said step of receiving product specification information comprises the step of receiving features information for the product.

[c5] A method in accordance with Claim 2 wherein said step of receiving product specification information comprises the step of receiving transformer information including at least one of coil material and electrostatic shield.

[c6] A method in accordance with Claim 5 wherein said step of comparing the received product specification information comprises the steps of:
determining whether the coil material selected is available for the selected transformer configuration; and
displaying a message if the selected coil material is not available for the selected transformer configuration.

[c7] A method in accordance with Claim 5 wherein said step of comparing the received product specification information comprises the steps of:
determining whether an electrostatic shield is suggested for use with the

selected transformer configuration; and
displaying a message if an electrostatic shield is not selected and if an electrostatic shield is suggested.

[c8] A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said step of receiving product information data from a user further comprises the step of receiving an identification of accessories for the product.

[c9] A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said step of downloading information related to the selected product comprises the step of downloading at least one of the features selected for the product and the accessories selected for the product.

[c10] A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said step of downloading information related to the selected product comprises the step of downloading a catalog number and list price for the selected product and generating a quotation for the selected product.

[c11] A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein the product specification information is received from the user via a graphical user interface.

[c12] A method in accordance with Claim 1 further comprising the step of assessing a need of the user based on at least one of a product application, product parameters, desired product features, and product accessories.

[c13] A method in accordance with Claim 12 further comprising the step of validating configuration compatibility based on the received product specification information to determine whether a resulting product incorporating a selected product having the received product specifications is capable of meeting parameters of the product.

[c14] A method in accordance with Claim 13 further comprising the step of guiding the user, if the resulting product does not meet the parameters of the product, to a correct product configuration.

[c15] A method in accordance with Claim 12 further comprising the step of

guiding the user to a compatible product.

[c16] A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said step of receiving product specification information from a user via the device comprises the step of receiving at least one of industrial, commercial, and residential product specification information from the user.

[c17] A system for facilitating selection of a component for an electrical distribution and control product, said system comprising:
a device; and
a server connected to said device and configured to receive component information data from a user via said device, the component information including at least one of a feature of the component and an accessory of the component, said server further configured to identify stored component information data that matches the component information data entered by the user.

[c18] A system in accordance with Claim 17 wherein the component is a transformer.

[c19] A system in accordance with Claim 17 wherein the transformer is a core and coil transformer.

[c20] A system in accordance with Claim 17 wherein said server further configured to select at least one component from the stored component information data which matches the component identification data entered by the user.

[c21] A system in accordance with Claim 17 wherein said server further configured to download to the user information related to the selected component.

[c22] A system in accordance with Claim 18 wherein said server further configured to select at least one transformer that includes at least one of a coil material and electrostatic shield.

[c23] A system in accordance with Claim 22 wherein said server further configured to:

determine whether the coil material selected is available for the selected transformer configuration; and display a message if the selected coil material is not available for the selected transformer configuration.

[c24] A system in accordance with Claim 22 wherein said server further configured to:
determine whether an electrostatic shield is suggested for use with the selected transformer configuration; and
display a message, if an electrostatic shield is not selected and if an electrostatic shield is suggested.

[c25] A system in accordance with Claim 17 wherein said server further configured to generate a quotation for each selected component.

[c26] A system in accordance with Claim 17 wherein said server further configured to accept a purchase order for the component after the purchase order has been authenticated against pre-determined criteria.

[c27] A system in accordance with Claim 17 wherein said device configured to be a server for a network of customer devices.

[c28] A system in accordance with Claim 17 wherein said server and said device are connected via at least one of a wide area network, a local area network and the Internet.

[c29] A system in accordance with Claim 17 wherein said server further configured to receive at least one of industrial, commercial, and residential product specification information from the user.

[c30] A computer programmed to:
prompt a user to select a component of an electrical distribution and control product;
prompt a user to provide information required to generate a component recommendation for the product; and

generate the recommendation using the user provided information.

[c31] A computer in accordance with Claim 30 wherein to prompt a user to select a component, said computer displays a computer generated screen listing a plurality of at least one of features, accessories, applications, and options.

[c32] A computer in accordance with Claim 30 wherein to prompt a user to provide information required to generate a component recommendation, said computer displays a computer generated screen listing a plurality of information boxes.

[c33] A computer in accordance with Claim 32 further programmed to search a database to identify components which match criteria supplied by the user in response to prompting the user to provide information required to generate the recommendation and to display to the user at least some information relating to at least some of the components identified as a match from the database search.

[c34] A computer in accordance with Claim 32 further programmed to prompt a user to select at least one of the identified components, and wherein to generate the component recommendation, said computer populates the document with data related to the one identified component.

[c35] A computer in accordance with Claim 30 wherein the component comprises a component for an electrical distribution and control product.

[c36] Apparatus comprising:
means for prompting a user to select a component for an electrical distribution and control product;
means for prompting the user to provide information regarding selected component; and
means for transmitting to the user a recommendation for a particular component.

[c37] Apparatus in accordance with Claim 36 wherein said means for prompting a

user to select a component comprises means for displaying a computer generated screen listing a plurality of component selections.

[c38] Apparatus in accordance with Claim 36 wherein said component comprises a transformer.

[c39] Apparatus in accordance with Claim 36 wherein said means for prompting a user to provide information comprises means for displaying a computer generated screen listing at least one of features, application, accessories, and options.

[c40] Apparatus in accordance with Claim 36 further comprising means for searching a database to identify components which match criteria supplied by the user in response to prompting the user to provide information regarding the selected components, and means for displaying to the user at least some information relating to at least some of the components identified from the database search.